

**An address on voting and laboring, delivered at Concert Hall, Tuesday evening,
March 10th, 1874 / by William Still.**

AN ADDRESS ON VOTING AND LABORING DELIVERED AT CONCERT HALL, Tuesday Evening, March 10th, 1874.

BY WILLIAM STILL.

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1874.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Philadelphia, March 2, 1874.

Mr. WILLIAM STILL:

Dear Sir:

In view of the conflicting rumors relative to your vote for Col. A. K. McClure, for Mayor, and also in view of the fact of having known, for a long time, of your labors and deep interest in the Anti-Slavery cause, and the welfare of our race, we would be pleased to hear a public address from you on the topic of voting, &c, in reply to the charges preferred against you, at such time and place as may suit your convenience.

Rev. Theo. Gould,

W. C. Banton,

Rev. R B. Johns,

David Rosell, m. d.,

Rev. John E. Price,

Wm. H. Crawford,

A. R. Bascom,
Rev. H. Mode,
John F. Brown,
Wm. H. Scott,
Chaplain W. H. Hunter,
F. P. Main,
Rev. B. T. Tanner,
Warley Bascom.
Robert Adger,
Rev. John F. Thomas,
Samuel Bevans,
James W. Brown,
Rev. M. F. Sluby,
James Fells.

Philadelphia, March 5 th, 1874.

Rev. THEO. GOULD, W. C. BANTON, Dr. DAVID ROSELL, CHAPLAIN HUNTER, and others:

Dear Sirs:

In reply to your kind letter of the 2d inst., to the effect that you "would be pleased to hear a public address" from me, on the "topic of voting, &c," I would say that it would afford me much satisfaction to make my views publicly known in the manner suggested, at Concert Hall, on Tuesday evening next, 10th instant., at 8 o'clock. Admission free to all.

Yours Respectfully, WM. STILL.

VOTING AND LABORING.

"The Press " the morning after the Lecture, March 11th, noticed the meeting as follows:

"At Concert Hall a large audience assembled last evening for the purpose of hearing Hr. William Still, one of Philadelphia's most prominent and well-to-do colored citizens, upon the subject of 'Laboring and Voting.' The hall was well filled, and the interest as great as has ever been noticed at any other lecture. There were many white people present who have been acquainted with the gentleman for a number of years, and for whom they entertain the greatest respect. Upon the platform were seated the following well-known champions of the old anti-slavery movement in this city, and whose names are known throughout the country: Robert Purvis, Bishop J. P. Campbell, of the African M. E. Church; Passmore Williamson, Charles Wise, and others.

At the appointed hour, Mr. Still, accompanied by Rev. W. H. Hunter, the publisher of the *Christian Recorder*, made his appearance upon the platform, which was the occasion of an outburst of applause. After order had been restored Mr. Hunter advanced to the front of the stage and said that a number of citizens had requested Mr. Still to deliver a lecture at his earliest convenience, which he had consented to do, and he was sure that the ladies and gentlemen present would experience intense pleasure from what they would hear. He then introduced Mr. Still, who in substance spoke as follows:"

Gentlemen and Ladies:

Since the fact of my having voted for the Candidate, for the mayoralty, of the Peoples' Party, in the recent Municipal election, has subjected me to the charge of having 'deserted my principles,' I propose briefly to refute the charge, and at the same time to give the reasons for my course. The friends of Freedom may judge whether I have swerved from the old platform of Equal Rights. 3

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Of convincing or satisfying mere partisans or politicians, I am free to say, I have no hope. I propose nevertheless to take up the points most objected to in my late communication on the election, and weigh them carefully. I quote from my late article as follows:

First. "Politics for me have had no charms. Since the colored man has been invested with the right of suffrage not a single political meeting have I attended, and I frankly confess that I have not been so much concerned as to whether the Hon. W. S. Stokley or the Hon. A. K. McClure should be the Centennial Mayor, as I have been as to how the thirty thousand colored citizens of Philadelphia

should be represented in the Centennial exhibition by their achievements in Mechanical Science, Literature, and by proofs of their material advancement."

Now while I have no objection to see colored men seeking office, as they have a perfect right to do like any other class of men, and while I am always glad to see them succeed; and while, moreover, I have never for one moment been disposed to find fault with colored men for urging their fellow-voters to take an interest in all our elections, why should it be thought strange that I should be more interested in seeking the means of elevating my race, than in bowing at the shrine of politics?

Again, in surveying the situation of the colored people in contrast with others, in the light of Anglo-Saxon liberty, knowledge and power, is the fact that, "I have not been so much concerned as to whether the Hon. W. S. Stokley or the Hon. A. K. McClure should be the Centennial Mayor, as I have been concerned that our thirty thousand colored citizens shall be represented in the Centennial." Is this a sign of desertion?

COLORED MEN OUGHT TO TAKE AN INTEREST IN THE CENTENNIAL.

While so many of us show so much indifference to these things, I am sure that when the time arrives for this country to exhibit her wonderful achievements in every description of industrial productions, mechanism, literature, philosophy, &c., all to the credit of Anglo-Saxon skill and knowledge, our people will hardly appear to advantage without some creditable contribution on the occasion. If much cannot be accomplished the best efforts possible should be put forth to make as fair a show of talent, knowledge and progress as the circumstances admit of. A hint to the wise is sufficient.

Some of us in contending in past years for Freedom and Equality before the law, made bold to assert that with these privileges secured to us in common with other men, we would aspire after trades, mechanical 5 arts, commercial pursuits, literature, professions, &c., despite the prejudices of our times. No man has stronger faith in the race to meet these common expectations than myself. I know that some among us are making improvements, but how far the masses have met just expectations, I will not undertake to indicate, but as an individual, protesting against the base attacks now made upon me with the aim of destroying my character and business, I will say that my work is before the public, and I am quite willing that the impartial judgment of the friends of the colored race here or elsewhere shall decide whether I have been faithful or a "deserter." Again I quote from my late article:

“For one, I am simple enough to think that the acquisition of knowledge, the pursuit of business enterprises, good trades and comfortable homes, where a more healthy and reputable existence may be secured, are of infinitely greater consequence than to be in any way connected with politics.”

What is there in these suggestions that savors of deserting the cause, or is in conflict with a due sense of “gratitude to the Republican Party?” Who can deny the fact that the colored people are greatly in need of knowledge? Who of our citizens white or colored who have taken the pains to glance over the almost universal sparcity of business enterprises, trades, comfortable homes, &c., amongst us, can fail to agree with me touching this peculiarly sad feature of our condition to-day in Philadelphia? I know that these things deeply concern the earnest-thinking, hard-working men of our race. I know too that the best friends of our race who have the interest of our people at heart agree with me in this respect. And I will venture to add still further that these benefits will not soon come to us through simply voting the Republican ticket as a matter of “gratitude,” nor by waiting for offices from the Republican party—never. To my mind the work of our elevation, after all, must come mainly through our own exertions and self-reliance. Honest earnest counsel is very much needed on this subject; and hard and steady-toiling, economical habits, with a single eye to business, character and integrity, are of incalculable importance as instrumentalities to be employed by every intelligent colored man desiring to see his race elevated.

SHOPS, STORES, TRADES, &C., OUGHT TO BE ENCOURAGED AMONGST THE COLORED PEOPLE.

While the fact cannot be denied that within ten squares of a particular locality in this city, not less probably than ten thousand colored people reside, all of the laboring class, and all consumers, allied to one 6 another in church fellowship, various societies, etc., yet are they found encouraging their husbands and wives, brothers and sisters in efforts to carry on shops, stores, trades and the like, as they should? It may be found that beams are standing in the eyes of some who are looking at motes in the eyes of others. Indeed here it is, the lack of enterprise amongst us, which for a long while has concerned my mind very deeply.

I think I see where the chances lie for men and women amongst us, to become active in business, and, provided they are properly educated, to enter roads lying close to them, which lead to ultimate success.

Although to-day a colored young man, a graduate of our High school, might search Market street in vain for a situation in a business-house as clerk, book-keeper or salesman, it ought not to be thought a matter impossible—indeed it ought to be thought a matter indispensably necessary, on the part

of colored men that a first-class business house should be established and ably conducted on that great business thoroughfare by a colored firm.

Such a house I have no doubt would not only be a novelty in the business centre of Philadelphia, but it would likewise be popular, and at the same time it would strike such a potent though silent blow against prejudice that I question whether there would be any further serious difficulties with respect to finding situations; and would not thousands of our white citizens who have had a friendly place in their hearts for us, but have not been prepared to trust to our brain ability sufficiently to invite us to situations such as I have alluded to, respond heartily to enterprises of this character? Doubtless thousands of Republicans would find much more pleasure in seeing the colored man show his "gratitude" in thus appreciating his liberty than in simply voting indiscriminately in municipal elections the entire Republican ticket irrespectively of the claim of the candidate to be voted for.

It is not enough that we have able and eloquent platform speakers, such as Douglass, Langston, Clark, Elliott, Garnett, Day, etc., or that we can boast of distinguished pulpit orators, such as Bishops Payne, Campbell, Brown, Wayman, Ward, etc., or that we are now represented in the Congress of the nation,—these facts only make it the more urgent that we should be represented in business. Again to quote what I have said:

VOTE ACCORDING TO YOUR JUDGEMENT.

"If a colored voter chooses, upon due consideration, to vote an independent, or non-partisan, or even Democratic ticket, I think he should be free to do so, and, still further, I think that colored men 7 who have been so long bound down under the yoke, and have been so long compelled to think and act only at the bidding of the dominant race, should be the last people on earth to institute or encourage this kind of political tyranny."

When penning this paragraph, (the most offensive one in the eye of one of our "distinguished colored leaders") contained in my late communication, I never thought that there would be the slightest room for alleging that I had undergone a change of sentiment with regard to voting, nor do I now see how such a view is in any sense whatever in conflict with the Fifteenth Amendment, or antagonistical to the avowed principles of the Republican party.

TO WHOM "GRATITUDE" BELONGS.

I am not forgetful of the fact that a good deal is claimed of the colored man on the score of "gratitude," and I must freely own that in view of the wonderful changes that have taken place in the condition of our race in this country within the last dozen years, our hearts cannot too often swell with gratitude to God and good men for what has been accomplished in the interest of Freedom and humanity.

Indeed I have thought a thousand times that there had been much less gratitude manifested than was really due to the friends of Freedom.

From my boyhood (I was in my teens when I first commenced taking Anti-slavery papers) I have intensely watched the movements of good men and women of all parties who openly espoused the cause of the slave when it was extremely unpopular and even dangerous to do so, some facing angry mobs, brickbats, prisons, enduring separations from friends and relatives where the ties were the strongest, expulsion from church and state, becoming a hissing and by-word, sacrificing time and money with a liberal hand in the cause of the slave. Men and women for adhering to the "higher law," and the commands of Christ to help undo every burden and let the oppressed go free, were daily called upon to suffer in every conceivable way; but they never relaxed their efforts, never ceased to push on the glorious work of emancipation, until the "irrepressible conflict," thus waged, had its desired results and every fetter was broken and every bondman free as air.

Now, if when the claims for special gratitude are made, they embrace these early, earnest, and self-sacrificing workers, I should only be too glad to be found at the "front." But I rather think those old workers have been overlooked and forgotten in the midst of political excitement—in the hurry of "counting in and counting out," which has become so common of late, in order to keep up party influences.

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I would say, therefore, that in order to show a gratitude, that would do honor both to the friends of the colored man and the cause, it might pay to gather such facts, narratives, and history relating to those self-sacrificing workers, as might be of interest and value to this and coming generations, especially, with the view of doing simple justice to all concerned, and that the offspring of the emancipated might know the great sacrifices which had been made for their race. And it might be well too to look abroad over the South and see the hundreds of schools and colleges that have been provided by the generous contributions, not of politicians, but chiefly of that same class of men and women who were true to freedom, and see if a little material aid, in the shape of donations and cheering words, would not prove as beneficial as simply to vote at the instance of a political Ring, on the pretext of gratitude.

Wilberforce University, Lincoln University, Howard University, Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, Berea College, and scores of others, working hard day and night in the interest of freedom and education, could not fail to appreciate any gratitude that our people might thus be disposed to offer; but it is not often that we hear amongst politicians any clamorous calls for gratitude in these directions.

WHY I VOTED FOR COL. A. K. MCCLURE.

Now, with regard to my vote for Colonel A. K. McClure: In this matter I did not act without due reflection. For some time before the election I had made up my mind that I could not consistently with my sense of duty, vote for the "Ring." The numerous election frauds, high taxes, &c., together with the very strenuous efforts made by this power to defeat the New Constitution, determined me to withhold my vote therefrom, provided that a Republican from the thirty-four thousand majority in Philadelphia for the New Constitution should be selected as an Independent or People's Party candidate.

Colonel McClure having been thus nominated, I decided to vote for him. For a long while he had been a prominent leader in the Republican party, filling the highest positions in the State Legislature, and also, for two years at least, he had been very actively co-operating with the Reformers of this city, a body of the most respectable and staid men of this city, largely made up from the Republican ranks. In the Senate he actively advocated the Constitutional Convention, and he was given the credit of having labored with success, and great force, in attacking many of the defects of the old constitution, and of advocating, with equal success, the important points of the new. Hence the fact of his running for Mayor in this independent manner, as a non-partisan, appeared to afford an opportunity for all independent thinking citizens, whether Republicans or Democrats, to vote according to honest convictions.

In order to free citizens from partizan trammels, especially with regard to municipal elections, the framers of the New Constitution had very wisely changed the municipal elections from October—the time of holding the State election (when State or National issues might have weight in constraining voters to follow party lines)—to February, when no State or National issues need be considered, but when men could vote in reference only to the city affairs, just as the stock-holders of the Pennsylvania Rail Road vote in electing their officers. Probably I am not wise enough or politician enough to see that this is a very "bad arrangement." I confess I like the change and look for good results therefrom. So much for voting a non-partisan ticket.

To come now to the most objectionable point, namely—the right of a colored man to vote a Democratic ticket if he chooses to do so upon due consideration.

This right seems so self-evident that under a Republican form of Government its denial, one might suppose, would subject a man to the charge of being out of his mind or very ignorant. In a government like ours, is this denial supportable? I think not for a single moment. I am sure no sane white Republican takes this extreme view held by some colored Republicans in Philadelphia. All private and public organizations, secular and religious, are directly at variance with this idea, and I presume I can very readily convince any reasonable man of the absurdity of the notion. For instance, the churches, colleges, and schools all over the land are composed of and controlled by Republicans and Democrats; Rail Roads, Banking Institutions, Insurance Companies, and in short all our great public or private corporations are managed by boards made up in this way. Nothing is more common and natural than to find Republicans and Democrats members of the same business firms—partners in every trade and profession; so indissolubly so that you might as well undertake to remove the Alleghany Mountains as to keep them separated. And even in politics we see the same intermingling constantly going on. See the President of the United States—the late Secretary of War, Ed. M. Stanton, Gens. Butler, Sheridan and many others conspicuous in the Republican ranks today, who were once conspicuous in the Democratic ranks.

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OLD AND NEW ISSUES.

The slavery issues on which the two parties have so long been contending are all, except Senator Sumner's Civil Rights Bill, settled, and the way is now prepared for new issues; such as Tariff, Currency, Specie Payments, Railroads, Government bonds, the United States Debt, the Granges Movement, &c. It needs but half an eye to see that these issues are soon to bring about many political changes. It is deeply interesting to mark how the signs are portending the near approach of these events.

Landless and without capital, even with the Civil Rights' Bill secured by the Congress of the Nation, the condition of the colored man would still be pitiable, unless he is wise. Of course he cannot vote the Democratic ticket when the Democratic party is arrayed against him; but it would not be unwise to carefully watch the changes in parties and movements, as there are many Democrats, doubtless, who still adhere to the party of their Fathers, who are no longer in sympathy with old pro-slavery doctrines and ideas; and while they still hold on to their party they are anxious for a general change, in which the civil and political rights of the colored man shall be recognized. Now which would be

just the best way on the part of the colored man to help bring about this desirable change, I may not be able to point out, but I am sure the counsel that favors the wholesale denunciation of every Democrat and every colored man who might be disposed to vote a Democratic ticket, will never hasten that long-looked for day of peace which should be desired by every American citizen.

CHANGES IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

Obvious changes have been going on in this city in the Democratic party all must admit,—Signs too palpable for a denial. For instance, I know full well, when laboring for years for the rights of the colored people in our city passenger cars, it was a common occurrence to meet men who would profess to be friendly, but would tell me that the Democrats would mob and kill the colored people the instant a change was made. Men would tell me that white people would not ride with us; however (thanks to a change in public opinion) our equal rights were secured. But no earthquake followed. No Democratic mobs have yet appeared. Colored people ride in the cars just as freely as they walk the streets, without the slightest molestation. I believed that it would be so, no less while I was getting signers to petitions than I do to-day with the fact verified before my eyes.

And here is another illustration:

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The jury box in Philadelphia until within a few years had never been occupied under the late constitution, by a man of African descent. Doubtless many men with the old hate and prejudice against the negro in their hearts, swore that they would never serve on a jury with one of this hated race. The first test came, and a Democrat, dyed in the wool, was on the bench.

You all remember how the negro-hating juryman defiantly refused to serve with the black citizen, and I am sure you have not forgotten how promptly the Democratic judge, Ludlow, imposed imprisonment and fine upon this unwilling brother. Since that day, although colored men have frequently served, I am not aware that the slightest objection has been made. Democratic judges in Philadelphia are not fools, at least. Still another sign worthy of note in this city. During the exciting canvasses preceding the vote for the New Constitution and for Mayor, I looked in vain to find in any of the Democratic papers any sneers against the colored man. Nor did it fall to my lot in passing and repassing through the streets to hear the insult and abuse that I had been accustomed to hear a few years prior to suffrage and riding in the cars. Now I regard these things as favorable signs, and as long as our people are under the necessity of seeking employment from Democrats, and as long as they choose to spend their money so freely with them in the localities where they live most numerous, I do not see the wisdom of reviving dead issues and thereby allowing ourselves to be

needlessly frightened by "Ring" office-seekers. Wrath kindleth wrath, and I am sure we have had enough of this baneful commodity to be willing to see it die out both in our own breasts and in the breasts of our nominal enemies.

"Let us have peace."

Perhaps I ought here to say that I have never been an aspirant for an office of any kind from the Republican party or any other. I have found greater satisfaction in pursuing my legitimate business than I ever could have found in any office that might have been conferred upon me. I am not a "sore-head."

PRACTICAL WORKERS.

Now lest some may infer from my remarks that there is no "silver lining to this cloud," I must not conclude without bringing to the front some of the more hopeful signs among our people in this city. Justice to many worthy citizens demands it on the present occasion. I am sorry that my time will allow me only to glance briefly at a few individual enterprises amongst us.

The first to which I will call your attention is located at No. 631 12 Pine street in an unpretending three story brick building. The Book Concern or Publication House of the A. M. E. Church is here established. Several young colored men are daily found setting type; one young man (Mr. W. C. Banton) has charge of the books or is assistant in the office, one other is in the capacity of a clerk; Chaplain W. H. Hunter manages the entire publishing department, and Rev. B. T. Tanner is the Editor of the "Christian Recorder," which is published here, and is the organ of the A. M. E. Church.

Since Emancipation, the borders of this Church have extended throughout the entire South, and over two hundred thousand souls are said to be embraced within its fold.

It need not be said that along with this vast number comes a vast amount of ignorance. It is the very material for cultivation.

To aid in the immediate elevation of the colored people generally, and in the Southern States particularly, this Publication House, and Wilberforce University in Ohio were established.

For the management of this enterprise, one better adapted to make it a successful force for good, and for urging upon the minds of young men the necessity of grasping a knowledge of printing, and business, perhaps it would have been a difficult matter to have found, than the person now

filling the office of publishing agent. Indeed, no man, except with an extraordinary degree of resolution and faith, would have accepted the position under as many embarrassing circumstances as surrounded the enterprise when he was invited to take charge. But the paper was needed; and the various books of the Concern were needed; and the knowledge of the art of printing was also needed. Notwithstanding the untoward state of affairs, therefore, the agent commenced his mission. And the result has been, the colored people have in Philadelphia a decently printed weekly paper, of respectable size, a credit to the race.

Nor has there been less manifest enterprise, improvement, and intelligence in the editorial department of this eight-page sheet, under the management of Rev. B. T. Tanner. No one can read it from week to week without feeling that the editor is keenly alive to the wants of his people. Every issue, more or less, reminds one that he is deeply concerned for the religious, moral, industrial, and political welfare of his whole race. Reading, thinking, and working for these grand and noble objects, with a most commendable ambition, seems to have been his daily delight. In order to give some idea of the improvement that has been made in every way, with regard to form and matter, you simply need to see a sheet issued five years ago and compare it with the last number. Interesting communications are 13 usually found in its columns from different parts of the Union, especially from the Southern States, relating to live questions of various import, making it interesting and worthy of a large circulation—four times larger than it now has.

Although a young man, the editor has written an interesting book of 468 pages, entitled "An Apology for African Methodism." He has also published a smaller book, entitled the "Negro's Origin." To the public these productions may be but little known, yet they are of much value, and ought to be appreciated, especially by the race concerned. And the author's efforts to shed light upon the history of his Church and people are highly creditable to him

Other enterprises, conducted by intelligent colored men, might be noticed in this connection. Suffice it to merely name a few: At 261 South Eighth street, an upholstery and furniture establishment is located, under the proprietorship of Mr. Warley Bascom, who is successfully proving every day that his workmanship, energy, integrity, and business-like deportment surmount prejudice and bring him a fair share of trade from first-rate customers, far and near.

At 618 South Eleventh street, Mr. J. F. Wallace is carrying on the grocery business prosperously, and keeps always on hand a full stock of excellent goods; and the general neatness, good order, and accommodation here observable forces the conclusion that Wallace understands his business thoroughly, and that he means to excel.

Likewise, at 1107 South street, Mr. Craven is keeping a very respectable-sized china store, that presents the same appearance of industry, thrift, business management, and prosperity that marks the appearance of stores kept by white business men. And although he had to learn himself the business, like many others, guided by a single eye, he surmounted all obstacles, and his place now is popular with all classes, without respect to politics or color.

Permanency and steady growth are characteristic in these several enterprises, a very cheering sign. And I can say I never pass these places without feeling a degree of pleasure and pride in seeing these men succeeding so well.

It has been thought by many that the colored ministers, whose churches lie within the near region of Sixth and Lombard streets, fail to instruct and press upon the attention of the community the wholesome lessons of moral as well as religious reform here needed. While I am not here to discuss this matter, and should not have the time to do it justice if I was ever so disposed to do so, I may refer at least to the Pastor of Old Bethel Church, whose parsonage, as well as Church, is located directly in the midst of this very sadly degraded quarter, where 14 he is called upon to witness the blighting and degrading effects of rum on the old and young, white and black. Within a few rods of his Church door and parsonage the rum-mills are busy, and thronged not only during week-day, but especially so throughout Sundays.

That he has seen the crying need of temperance, the doing away with policy dealing, and of actively working himself, as well as to incite his large congregation to the most vigilant efforts to co-operate for the redemption of the neighborhood; those who know him well and hear him often can testify. Probably, but few ministers in this city have duties so trying, and contend with difficulties with more zeal and judgment than does Elder Gould.

As some may fancy that what I am saying is merely out of compliment to Elder Gould, I will mention one fact which will be sufficient to remove all doubt on this point.

In a part of the Seventh ward where dwells a large body of colored people, and where there is no colored church, and no Sunday-School, less than two years ago, the work of providing for this necessity was undertaken by Elder Gould and a few of his brethren. Fortunately, in the exact locality where the work was needed a church property was found in the market.

Feeling that it would not do to let so good an opportunity slip, on simple faith the purchase was effected. This rendered it immediately necessary that a good deal of hard work should be done in order to raise among his poor congregation and friends several thousand dollars to meet the payments as per agreement. Now although the panic overtook them in the midst of the effort, with

such a leader there was no failure. Notwithstanding, for various other charitable and worthy objects, appeals for help from Sabbath to Sabbath pressed upon his church, it has already proved to be a great success in the vicinity of 20th and Lombard streets. Full congregations and a large Sunday School convene in the church regularly.

A slight idea may thus be gained of the labors of some of our intelligent and working ministers who have the interest of their people at heart. And although from outward appearance but little seems to be accomplished, very laudable efforts are being made in the way of Reform.

I might go a little further and mention the labors of others—of one or two other missions which have been carried on most faithfully for a good number of years in St. Mary street, among the most degraded of that ill-fated locality where wretchedness, poverty and vice seem to know no bounds; where intemperance and degradation so strongly prevail that it would hardly seem possible that children 15 born under such horrid influences could become other than hopelessly depraved. It is nevertheless true, even in this dreadful locality, quite a number of faithful and upright poor people reside. Indeed, from circumstances over which they have no control, they are compelled to live here; hence they need sympathy. This favor this class have signally found through the benevolence of the venerable "Friend," John M. Whitall, who, with the assistance of a generous corps of male and female workers, personally from Sabbath to Sabbath repairs to the old St. Mary street colored church (owned by Geo. H. Stuart) and there devotes a portion of the afternoon to imparting Sabbath School instruction to adults chiefly, who seem highly gratified with the favors thus conferred. Especially, so, as the mission of Friend Whitall does not end with his services in the Sabbath School. For the poor he has with him always, and it is pretty well understood that not a few amongst those instructed on Sundays are often the recipients of material aid on week days from his private resources.

In this same locality, and indeed in the same building, a work not less important, not less benevolent, requiring no less sacrifices and devotion to the elevation of the colored people, has been faithfully carried on for about fourteen years under the superintendence of James Grant, assisted by George H. Stuart, Jr., and others deeply interested in the Reform work. Here, likewise, the way of reaching the poor degraded children is through the Sunday School, and various other modes of benevolence.

While the work must, from the very nature of the circumstances, be very hard and trying, it has nevertheless been cheerfully prosecuted, and some have been led thereby to lead lives of temperance, industry and uprightness, to their own credit as well as to the credit of humanity and civilization generally.

Thus in surveying some at least of the varied fields where earnest and efficient men, colored and white, are striving for the mastery over prejudice, ignorance, intemperance and vice; where in view of

our newly recovered rights all rational men with a particle of interest in their hearts for our elevation must admit, that it is only in proportion as these nobler efforts are made, will the blessings of liberty and the enjoyments of equal rights be made exceedingly valuable.

For thirty years, ever since becoming a resident of this city, my sympathy has been unwavering on the side of those laboring to promote the claims of the oppressed. And never has my interest been greater than it is to-day. Never have I been more thoroughly convinced of the absolute necessity of working earnestly than I am today 16 day. All I see around me tends only to admonish me that the colored man has still a "big job" before him.

And I trust I may here be pardoned for suggesting that it might be well for those "leading colored men" who addressed an indignation meeting the other week in Liberty Hall, and there abused Mr. Robert Purvis and myself especially "for having turned traitors to our principles," to find employment in some of those needed fields of industry and reform to which allusion has been made. Of course these labors may not be so congenial to their taste as trying to blacken the character of others. Is this "showing gratitude to the Republican?"

MANY REPUBLICANS AND PROMINENT ABOLITIONISTS AGAINST THE RING.

Many Republicans and long-trying friends of freedom who are still at work voted against the ring, and for Col. McClure.

The President and some of the most prominent members of the old Abolition society, who have so long proved their steadfastness to the slave and humanity, and are still aiding Freedmen's schools and colleges in the south, and also prominent managers of the Home for Aged and Infirm Colored people likewise voted in the same way. Four out of the five trustees for colored Soldiers and Sailors' Orphans resolved to do likewise, and I think sounder Abolitionists and friends of equal rights, judged by their deeds could not readily be found, and I have also been credibly informed that several if not all of the managers of the High School went decidedly against the ring. Have all these turned traitors? Is it not rather presuming to say the least, on the part of the few "leading colored gentlemen" alluded to above, who do not even touch with their delicate fingers the burdens that oppress the colored people, to assume in this despotic manner the right to dictate how others shall vote? For this service they may succeed in getting "their pockets lined with Republican stamps." But I have too high a regard for the great body of intelligent men in the Republican party to believe that they will be largely duped by these pretensions.

You have now fully and frankly my position touching politics; what I think about "gratitude," and what I think touching the work and duties of colored men generally, under their peculiar and delicate situation as citizens.

With regard to the Democratic party, I will here take occasion to say, I have never joined it, have never sought to do so, nor have I ever been solicited to do so. The allegation made by "the leaders," that money was used is wholly false without a shadow of truth whatever for its foundation, as the offer of a single farthing, directly or indirectly, was never made to me by any one, nor was it ever demanded by me from any source.